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ABSTRACT

Textbooks currently available for foreign language instruction are generally oriented toward instruction in grammar for its own sake. Until materials are developed that are specifically geared to a systematic development of communicative competence, textbooks must be adapted. This handbook is directed toward that need. It emphasizes the following points: (1) the central features of communicative proficiency and the process of communicative interaction as these relate to the specification of learning outcomes for foreign language courses; (2) the feasibility of designing academic foreign language courses to parallel this process through the application of concepts of communicative and functional-notional syllabus design; (3) a systematic approach for adapting textbooks; and (4) illustration of the application to guide teachers in their own materials adaptation. The systematic approach to textbook-adaptation provides a step-by-step analysis of the process and includes tables linking points of grammar, meanings, and ordering for functional practice; tables on the common purposes of language use related to language skills; and a hierarchy of communicative activities. The process is illustrated by numerous examples of purposeful language activities that may be derived by attaching meanings and functions to points of grammar in basic text series. A list of references completes the volume. (AMH)

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LANGUAGE IN EDUCATION:
Theory and Practice

44

Gail Guntermann
and June K. Phillips

Functional-Notional Concepts: Adapting the Foreign Language Textbook

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Sophia Behrens, Editor

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Introduction

There is little doubt that communication with members of other cultures is the principal purpose of foreign language study today. Surveys of students' preferences (e.g., Myers 1980) and of teachers' objectives (Rivers 1979) reveal unmistakable agreement with the findings of the President's Commission on Foreign Language and International Studies on this point. This orientation to communication and culture, nurtured most recently by a nascent awareness of the interdependence of peoples who must learn to coexist on a shrinking globe, has resulted in a flurry of oral activity in foreign language classrooms.

Teachers recognize that communicative ability seldom--if ever--develops without communicative training, as learners acquire only those skills that they practice (Jarvis and Hatfield 1971, Joiner 1974, Savignon 1972). We have learned that communicative proficiency does not result from grammar analysis alone nor from mechanical drill and memorization. Nevertheless, there has been little coherence in the recent plethora of activities and approaches; the literature of the profession is replete with ideas for classroom exercises designed to get students to express themselves, yet "communicative competence," a term adopted from sociolinguistics (Hymes 1972) and widely applied in the statement of goals, is only now being defined for purposes of foreign language learning and teaching.

Although even the most haphazard communicative activity, if practiced intensively and with a variety of topics, might lead eventually to the ability to express oneself, the time limitations that typically restrict foreign language study in this country require that special care and efficiency be exercised in the design of courses. An "eclectic" approach (in the "aimless" sense of the word) runs several risks: (1) Important lexical, morphological, syntactic, or sociolinguistic features of the language may be overlooked, or those selected for practice may not be the most useful. Furthermore, there is no guarantee that there will be sufficient reentry of words, expressions, and forms for thorough incorporation into long-term memory or for practice in retrieving and recombining them. (2) When a particular type of activity appeals to students and keeps them involved, teachers may be tempted to overuse that exercise and cease to apply more varied ones. As one set of activities becomes habitual, learners lack varied types of practice. (3) Without systematic planning, there is no assur-

ance that students will learn essential functions related to "real" communicative exchanges. (4) The textbook explanation of a grammar point is not always indicative of its meaning and eventual functioning in the language; consequently, students may spend time mastering a linguistic form rather than a communicative task (e.g., using infinitives to give instructions or present tense forms to talk about future events, both of which occur frequently in some languages, but not in typical textbooks).

It is essential, then, that the material to be learned in a program or course be systematically specified. Increasingly, foreign language educators around the world are becoming concerned with identifying and classifying the components of communication for pedagogical purposes. While the results of these efforts are beginning to influence the writing of textbooks, most published learning materials remain essentially oriented to grammar for its own sake. Until communication-based texts are available, teachers who opt for such an approach will need to make extensive adaptations.

In view of this need, the objectives of this paper are:

(1) To review briefly what we believe to be the central features of communicative proficiency and the process of communicative interaction as they relate to the specification of learning outcomes for foreign language courses.

(2) To discuss the feasibility of designing academic foreign language courses to parallel this process, through the application of current concepts of communicative and functional-notional syllabus design.

(3) To present a systematic approach of our own for adapting textbooks currently in use, in order to provide meaningful, purposeful communication practice.

(4) To demonstrate the application of the system with sufficient examples so that this publication serves as a handbook for adapting learning materials for communicative language practice in all four skills--speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

Because it is essentially a handbook, the bulk of the text will deal with objectives (3) and (4). For the reader who wishes an in-depth review of the theoretical bases for communicative language teaching in general and for functional-notional approaches in particular, references are included. Finally, a bibliography of articles and books containing further ideas for classroom activities is provided.

In many cases we do not use terms in their most technical sense. We make no distinction, for example, between functions and purposes of language use, although we prefer the latter term for our pedagogical ends, on the grounds that purposes are more personal and comprehensible to students; the very statement of them can become ready-made, student-oriented objectives. Also, since beginners must limit themselves to expressing their meanings as clearly and simply as possible, the purposes of communication that we shall build upon are those that are explicit and conscious. We make no attempt to deal with the fact that most utterances by native speakers express several layers of meaning, both conscious and subconscious, explicit, implicit, and implicational (Jakobovits 1970).

Furthermore, the term "communicative competence" is set aside in favor of communicative proficiency or ability, which refers to the ability to carry out one's purposes, primarily through the use of language. There are as many levels of communicative proficiency as there are learners; communication, then, is not an absolute term for a skill that is completely developed, nor does it refer here to basic survival skills. We are concerned, instead, with the progressive acquisition of an ability to use a language to achieve one's communicative purposes. Finally, this paper deals with providing learners practice in creative, purposeful use of language, assuming that any necessary mechanical practice will already have been done.

1. FORM, MEANING, AND FUNCTION IN COMMUNICATION

Just as language acquisition is no longer seen as the relatively simple formation of habits and automatic responses, language description is not a matter of describing surface forms and structures divorced from meaning. Transformational grammar, semantics, speech act theory, pragmatics, and the multiple focuses of sociolinguistics have contributed to a view of language that stresses its creative use to convey meaning in socially appropriate ways. To put it simply, when one speaks or writes, as well as when one reads or listens, it is done with a purpose. When native speakers use past tense verb forms, for example, they express relationships between events and time, in order to carry out such purposes as telling jokes, relating events of the day (perhaps with the added hope of receiving sympathy or congratulations), chastising (You didn't take out the garbage!), getting out of trouble (I didn't do it; I left before it happened), or any number of other communicative functions.

Linguistic forms and structures are selected to convey specific meanings that are required for particular kinds of func-

tions, and the selection of these meanings and forms is affected by the interlocutors' perceptions of such factors as each other's age, sex, roles, relationships, and attitudes, the topic of the exchange and the shared cultural presuppositions about its appropriateness, delicacy, intimacy, etc.; the type of speech that is chosen, such as story telling, discussion, debate, or monologue; and the physical and psychological setting. Individuals' strategies for interacting--that is, the way in which they open and close exchanges; the means by which topics are chosen, developed, changed, or avoided; the taking of turns and interrupting; and the means for repairing miscommunication--also depend upon their perceptions of the above variables. Furthermore, the nature of these variables, as well as the ways in which the participants perceive them, are likely to differ according to the cultural backgrounds of the participants.

Intercultural communication is indeed a complex process, one that has yet to be fully understood. The following illustrations, therefore, attempt to outline the process in basic terms, so that it may be analyzed for the feasibility of its application to course design. Figure 1 is a simple diagram of how speaking purposes are filtered through the influencing variables to arrive at specific meanings and possible forms for expressing them. Table 1 demonstrates this in greater detail.

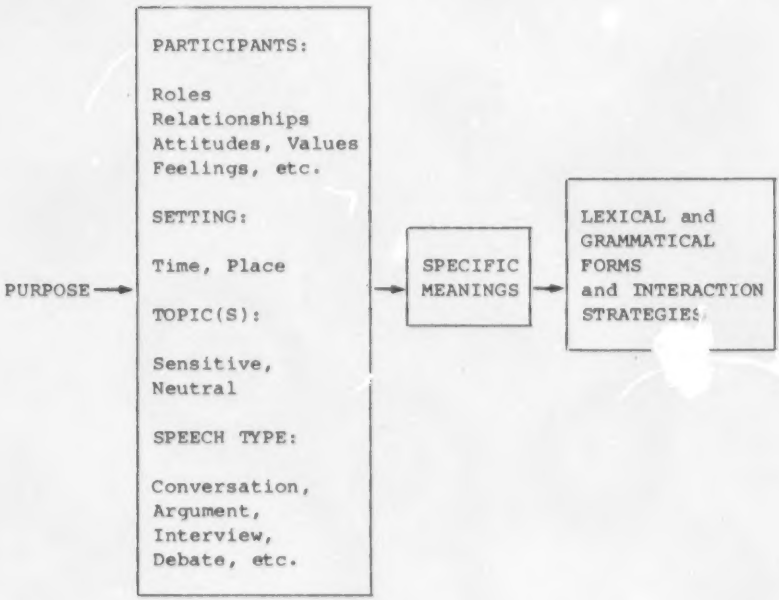
Similar diagrams might be drawn to represent communicative processes in listening, reading, and writing. The listener's interpretation of what is heard depends upon his or her perceptions of the participants, the setting, the topic, and the type of speech; a reader interprets written material through perceptions of genres, setting, characters, and topics, as well as expectations and experiences brought to the material; and a writer considers his or her genres, topics, and audience when selecting specific meanings to express and the forms with which to express them.

It would seem logical that language course and materials designers could proceed in a similar manner if learners are to communicate in the target language in much the same purposeful way that they express themselves in their native language. The feasibility of beginning with the purposes or functions of language--that is, placing them at the center of the course and deriving grammatical and lexical forms from them--is as yet unclear, as the following discussion will show. In section 2, we will propose an alternate approach.

Functional-Notional Approaches

Increasingly, foreign language educators are looking to functional-notional approaches for ways to organize courses

Figure 1. A diagrammatic conceptualization of communicative functioning.



whose goal is communicative proficiency. Functional-notional syllabus design originated in Europe, where the Council of Europe sought a common unit-credit standard and a means of teaching adults with specific communicative needs. Based primarily on semantic theory and the study of speech acts, it attempts to tie together the semantic, sociocultural, and linguistic elements of communication for pedagogical purposes. Still in its embryonic stages, it is a planning process by which functions, notions, vocabulary, and grammar are selected to fit the communicative needs of learners.

Functions refer to the hundreds of purposes for which people communicate, either orally or in writing. They are subsumed under general categories such as "imparting and seeking factual information," "expressing and finding out intellectual attitudes," "expressing and finding out emotional attitudes," "expressing and finding out moral attitudes," "getting things done (suasion)," and "socializing" (van Ek and Alexander 1977, p. 5).

Notions refer to the meanings expressed through linguistic forms, such as time and time relations, quantity, space and

TABLE 1

Examples of Speaking Skill Purposes in a Communicative Act

Purpose	Situation		Meanings	Forms
Expressing Frustration	Role:	Student to teacher	Past time	Last night . . .
	Topic:	Inability to do homework assignment	Inability	I couldn't . . .
	Setting:	Classroom, before class	Difficulty	It was too dificult.
	Speech type:	Statements of fact	Vagueness (non-accusing)	I don't know (why).
Requesting information	Role:	Motorist and pedestrian	Politeness	Excuse me . . .
	Topic:	Location of a building	Location in space	Can you tell me . . .
	Setting:	City Street	Questioning	Where is . . .
	Speech type:	Short questions		How far . . .
Giving advice	Role:	Close friends (one is very sensitive)	Concern	I would probably . . . (+ inf.)
	Topic:	Relationship with boyfriend	Helpfulness	You might . . . (+ inf.)
	Setting:	Coffee shop, after class	Non-judgment	You could try . . . (+ pres. part. or inf.)
	Speech type:	Suggestions	Non-interference	Why not . . . (+ inf.)

spatial relations, probability and possibility, intention and obligation. Extensive inventories of functions and notions have been devised (Coste et al. 1976, van Ek and Alexander 1977, Munby 1978, Wilkins 1976) from which to select course materials. Our own lists of communicative purposes for the four skills, transferable to classroom practices, are given in Tables 4 and 5, pp. 26 to 31.

While functional-notional approaches are evolving and may be expected to take various forms as they are explored for their applicability to specific educational situations, the following are some of their major characteristics:

(1) They stress what people do with language. While grammar and vocabulary are incorporated, they are not placed at the center of strictly functional courses. The title and focus of a lesson, then, might be "Seeking Information about Past Events," rather than "Preterit versus Imperfect," although some of these verb forms would be learned as essential for carrying out the function.

(2) Planning a syllabus for a particular course begins with an assessment of the communicative needs of the students. What functions will they need to perform? In the case of courses for specific purposes (e.g., German for Turkish migrant workers or Spanish for medical personnel), this needs assessment can be conducted empirically; for general-purpose, "global" courses in academic settings, functions must be selected according to criteria other than immediacy of need, except for those typical of classroom interaction. Canale and Swain (1979) suggest the following criteria in setting priorities: "the generalizability of functions from one communicative event to another, the complexity of the grammatical forms appropriate to express the functions, the range of sociolinguistic variables crucially involved in a function, and the interrelationships among these sociolinguistic variables that must be known . . ." (p. 46).

(3) An effort is made to specify levels of proficiency on the basis of the identification of communicative needs. The first level to be described was the "threshold level," at which learners should be able to get along socially and communicate most of their needs during a visit to a country where the language is spoken, or in interaction with foreign visitors. According to van Ek and Alexander (1977), it would take about three years of study in schools to achieve this basic ability to communicate. Specifications for this level are being written for various languages in the form of lists of functions, notions, and linguistic and lexical items (e.g. Coste et al. 1976, Slagter 1979, van Ek 1975, van Ek and Alexander 1977).

The advantages of a functional-notional approach are many. Most obviously, learners should be motivated by being able to experience language study that is related to specific purposes in real life. Second, this approach facilitates involving students in functional communication from the earliest stages of learning. Communication is not left for the third year of study, when most students have abandoned the cause, and those who have remained are forced to repeat the study of the same grammar without having achieved proficiency in its use.

Third, since much of what is said or written is governed by social and cultural conventions that determine the effectiveness of an effort to communicate, these approaches offer a potential solution to the problem of combining the study of language and culture; in fact, the syllabus could conceivably include any communicative experience to the extent that it can be stated in functional or notional terms. Creating poetry and music, and listening to them, are no less communicative functions than arguing, explaining, or gathering information.

Clearly, this approach also facilitates planning, beginning as it does with the statement of outcomes in functional terms, e.g., "introducing people," which can easily become a measurable objective: "Each student will introduce three fictitious native speakers of varying age and sex to a classmate, observing appropriate sociolinguistic conventions." For testing, a checklist of important linguistic and nonlinguistic aspects of the task can be used for relatively simple exchanges. For more complex functions (e.g., telling stories), rating scales can be devised to evaluate appropriateness, completeness, and clarity of expression as well as the linguistic aspects. Finally, if teachers carefully plan and evaluate the essential elements of any attempt to communicate, learners can be made aware of the complex requirements of effective communication beyond the correct use of the language itself.

Unanswered Questions

In addition to the philosophical question of whether or not to assume that utilitarian pursuits are the most valuable for language learners (Valdman 1980), there are a number of unsolved problems relating to functional-notional course design:

(1) If functions and/or notions are to be placed at the center of courses, on what basis should they be selected and sequenced? Which are the most common or generalizable to a wide range of situations? Which require the least complex grammatical forms and the least specialized or esoteric lexical items? Which involve the least sociolinguistic complexity? Should

learners themselves decide which functions are most important to them? (Harlow et al. 1980)

(2) Is it not pedagogically unsound to avoid sequencing grammatical elements according to difficulty? While some linguistic theorists maintain that it is unnatural and perhaps unnecessary to separate a language into its smallest parts and then ask learners to build it back up again (Newmark and Reibel 1968, Wilkins 1976), there is no evidence that learners can deal with material organized solely by function.

(3) If it is necessary to sequence both the functions and the grammar, how can the two be integrated systematically? It would seem that if one is ordered, the other will remain random, since there is no natural order between form and function; that is, it cannot be demonstrated that particular forms--the command forms, for example--are always used for a particular function, such as giving instructions. In Spanish, instructions may be communicated through infinitives (batir los huevos, agregar la harina, preparar un receptáculo, calentar el horno, etc.), reflexives (se baten los huevos, se agrega la harina, se prepara . . .), or expressions like hay que + infinitive (Hay que agregar la harina . . .).

(4) To what extent is it reasonable to practice the various sociolinguistic elements of communication? At present, little is known about the behaviors that are most appropriate for second and foreign language learners to assume as they communicate with native speakers. Furthermore, if the circumstances of a speech event are specified (e.g., participants' roles, relative ages, sex, power; their attitudes and values; the delicacy or intimacy of the topic), do we not run the risk of (a) overburdening learners with detail, (b) limiting creativity, which is a requirement for language acquisition, (c) limiting the practice to material not sufficiently transferable, and (d) overgeneralizing rules of social behavior? Finally, are students interested in dealing with so much detail at early stages of learning?

(5) How can material be articulated so that it does not appear to be a string of unrelated functions; that is, what kinds of connecting themes and transitions between functions would be appropriate?

(6) The process of functional-notional course design is based primarily on the identification of communication needs; research is needed to test the efficacy of its application to learning situations. Will learners acquire language more efficiently and completely through this approach? Are the stipulated levels of communicative proficiency in accordance with stages and processes of language acquisition?

(7) Even if all these questions can be resolved satisfactorily for special-purpose courses, can the same be done for global courses, in which learners' future communication needs may be unknown, varied, or even negligible? And might it not be better to stress receptive skills at the earliest levels in academic programs, letting students observe extensively the functions as well as the grammatical elements before they are asked to perform them?

These problems are being faced as materials and course designers attempt to implement potentially valuable functional-notional concepts. Two possible solutions to the problem of sequencing the materials are found in (a) the spiraling, or cyclical, arrangement of material, whereby a function or linguistic feature is practiced in its simplest form early in the course and reintroduced in subsequent lessons in increasing depth and complexity, so that learners can carry out important purposes at the beginning and then expand their repertoires to include several alternatives from which to select more precise meanings; and (b) the receptive/productive dichotomy, which allows for the separation of essential material for speaking and writing purposes from the functions and forms that are needed primarily for comprehending what others say and write.

If these concepts are applied, learning will be seen as a continuum, and levels will depend upon how much can be accomplished in the time allotted and upon the needs and interests of the learners. The description of "survival," "waystage," and "threshold" levels of proficiency (van Ek and Alexander 1977, Guntermann 1979) can guide teachers in setting goals and choosing material to be taught.

Future work on the application of functional-notional concepts in combination with features of other communicative approaches will most likely result in more than one model for course design. Meanwhile, most texts are modeled on grammatical sequences; thus, it is the task of communication-oriented classroom teachers to find a system to apply communicative and functional-notional concepts to their core material. In the remainder of the paper, we attempt to provide a guide for that task.

2. A PROCESS FOR BUILDING FUNCTIONAL PRACTICE ON A GRAMMATICAL CORE

Rationale

Since a great deal of research and testing of functional-notional approaches has still to be done, it does not yet

appear to be feasible to place functions at the center of courses and materials for wide use in schools and colleges. Nevertheless, it is possible to convert structure-based courses to a functional orientation, and textbook writers are seeking systematic means to provide functional practice with grammatical features. In the meantime, teachers can adapt texts currently in use to make them more functional. There are justifications, both theoretical and practical, for maintaining a grammatical core and applying meanings and functions for communicative practice. First, the linguistic material in texts has been systematically selected and sequenced according to well-established criteria (e.g., the inclusion of all parts of speech; the relative complexity and learning difficulty of linguistic features; features that contrast with those of the native language; similarities in form among target-language features; relative frequency of occurrence; requisite knowledge for subsequent learning; and--to some extent--usefulness, although this criterion has received little emphasis and may need to be reevaluated as intensive communicative practice is implemented).

Another justification for building communicative courses around a grammatical core is that learners' communicative ability is limited by their knowledge of the language; the more grammar and vocabulary they control, the more they can comprehend, say, read, and write. Native speakers may be aware of this limitation and not expect native-like proficiency; they may, in fact, be quite content with comprehending learners' messages, and they may concentrate more on the grammatical and lexical aspects than on foreigners' observance of sociocultural conventions (Canale and Swain 1979, p. 44)--at least at early stages of learning. Furthermore, if emphasis were not placed on grammar, there might be more danger that instances of learners' "interlanguage" (imperfect forms of language that are used at various levels of proficiency) would "fossilize" or stagnate as soon as novices became content with their ability to function in the most basic way, that is, with a very rudimentary command of the forms and structures of the language. At that point, when learners ceased to progress, depending instead on this barely comprehensible linguistic repertoire, native speakers might be most likely to react negatively (Galloway 1980).

The approach to functional practice proposed in this paper begins, then, with texts and materials as they now exist. The grammar and vocabulary in typical texts have been sequenced in similar ways. Learning tasks tend to conform to certain types: dialogues, pattern drills, listening exercises, question-and-answer practices, reading passages, and written exercises--all for the primary purpose of teaching language itself. Some of

the newest texts and certain types of exercises, such as those with contextual formats or group activities, are more easily adapted for functional practice than others.

The Process--Adapting the Textbook

The planning process outlined and exemplified here is applicable to any course or level of study and includes four stages:

(1) Select from the text materials the essential grammar and vocabulary that are to be emphasized in the intensive communication practice.

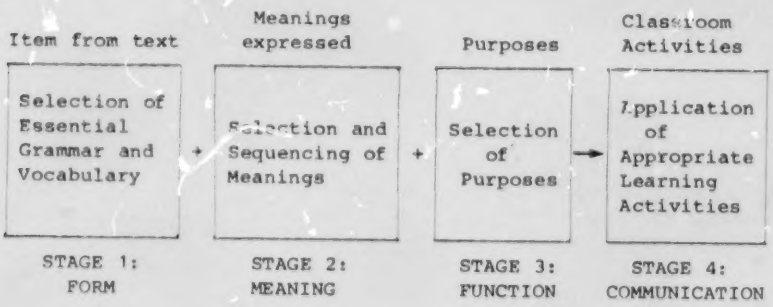
(2) Select and sequence the meanings that are expressed through the forms chosen in Stage (1) (when there are multiple meanings).

(3) Select and sequence the purposes for practice.

(4) Apply appropriate activities to carry out the functions of Stage (3), using the grammar and vocabulary in Stage (1) to express meanings in Stage (2).

Figure 2 demonstrates the process graphically.

Figure 2: The four stages of the planning process.



Stage 1: The Selection of Grammar and Vocabulary

Experience fraught with frustration has convinced many teachers that it is not possible to finish Book I in the first year of instruction without sacrificing communication practice and, consequently, the goal of proficiency. Teachers committed to that goal must make important and difficult decisions: they might spread the book out over a year and a half (or more) and deal with students' boredom with the book and, perhaps, their

observation that they are "covering" less material; or they might select essential parts of the material for practice, expand that practice to communicative activities, and delete or delay work with less important items.

Perhaps a suitable solution, geared to the latter choice, can be found in the dichotomy of productive versus receptive goals. When one is dealing with functional proficiency, at each level of learning some material is more essential for productive communication, although most is important for comprehension.[1] Listening and reading require a wider knowledge of vocabulary and grammar, since the learner cannot limit others' speech and writing to his or her own linguistic knowledge.

In adapting the text, then, the teacher might select certain forms for productive practice. The decision about what to emphasize will depend upon several criteria: in general, simpler forms will be used for productive purposes before more complex ones; those that are highly frequent, that is, generally applicable to many functions, will be stressed before the more specific ones; and regular forms will be easier to learn to command than irregular ones, although very useful and common irregular forms will need to be taught early for productive purposes. At subsequent levels, the material chosen for receptive practice for beginners can be reintroduced for productive practice, following a spiral or cyclical arrangement.

An important question to be asked in the selection and sequencing of materials concerns the degree of control that should be expected of learners. Which forms, structures, and rules of grammar are most and least readily acquired at each level? Features that are very complex may not be controllable for beginners, yet if they are important for communication, they should be practiced intensively, but in manageable chunks. If the text requires that students memorize and apply all the rules for ser and estar in Spanish, the teacher will have to order these rules according to usefulness and difficulty. Again, this is an item that might be cycled, with certain aspects delayed until needed for one of the language purposes undertaken later in the course.

Much of the growing work with error analysis demonstrates that learners are unable to control certain grammatical fea-

[1]Because learners in academic courses are not likely to have immediate needs for expressing themselves, and because recent research points to the value of extended listening practice, some teachers may prefer to prolong receptive practice with all the material to be learned, postponing productive skill development until the learners are ready.

tures until they have reached the most advanced levels. Common characteristics of learners' grammars as compared to adult native grammars are as follows:

- omission and misuse of articles and copula
- lack of agreement between verbs and their subjects, and the use of subject pronouns to indicate the agents of actions
- simplification of tense systems (for example, present tense forms to indicate past and future time, and the use of adverbs to clarify meanings)
- confusion of prepositions
- errors in word order, especially in question and negative formations and the placement of object pronouns

Learners' speech is simplified to the essentials for meeting the most basic communicative needs, and this basic communication requires forms that carry the most meaning--nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbial expressions of time, and subject pronouns--for the expression of such concepts as relations between events and time, quantity, space relations, needs and attitudes, and feelings. Thus, for example, teachers might well emphasize adverbs of past time (last week, yesterday, last summer) for assuring that the intended tense is understood while beginners are learning to control the verb forms. Even at higher levels, learners tend to "backslide" when communicating in less structured exercises; learning time expressions assures that the time constraint will be understood.

When alternative modes of expression are available, the applications of the above guidelines are particularly evident; for example, the typical French text, in presenting interrogative structures, gives at least three, often four, alternatives: (1) intonation (or the question mark in writing), (2) est-ce que plus a statement, (3) inversion, and (4) use of the tag, n'est-ce pas? Generally, there are productive exercises for all with a heavy concentration on inversion (perhaps because it is most difficult?). However, in early stages, the student can function productively by limiting the asking of questions to "est-ce que," which works for yes/no questions as well as information questions. The other forms could be taught for receptive use. The teacher gains valuable time for communicative practice, the student can carry out questioning functions, and there is evidence that the use of the other forms will come when the student is ready. (See Tables 2 and 3, pp. 18-23, for examples of the ordering of practice with grammar points and their meanings.)

Similar criteria may be applied to the selection of essen-

tial vocabulary. Students can often help reduce a list of words by identifying those they would really use to express themselves. While the lexical items of most textbooks are based on frequency lists, there are usually words that can be relegated to receptive practice, even in the first lessons. If students will not soon need to use certain words actively, they should probably be in the recognition category.

In addition, texts vary in the ways in which they group and sequence words. If a thematic grouping is used (certainly a priority in text selection for communicative goals), the vocabulary will cluster around certain meanings that lend themselves to the practice of related functions. If, for example, an early lesson stresses the expression to like in conjunction with a variety of pastimes, students can practice the function "sharing likes and dislikes" regarding activities. The teacher's task also includes expanding or deleting at that point; if the text presents words for a pastime that turns out to be of no interest to any student, these words can be eliminated, at least at an early stage, for in class no one will say them or hear them unless forced to by an artificial exercise. On the other hand, if students jog, "jogging" might be an expression that should be added.

Stage 2: The Application of Meanings

Once the grammatical and lexical features for productive communicative practice have been identified and sequenced, their meanings may be listed, and the most essential meanings can be chosen for productive practice at the earliest stages of learning, with the less useful meanings left until a later time in the course or program. Textbook presentations of language elements often pay little attention to the varied meanings these items represent.

For example, infinitives are studied because of the structural category to which they belong, because they are the "dictionary form" of the verb; the fact that infinitives might express certain notions or contribute toward certain functions is largely ignored. If the teacher decides to explore the meanings they carry, he or she might begin with infinitives used to express commands, particularly in written language.

The general purpose of indicating conventions--the do's and don't's of behavior--is carried out in several languages by infinitive constructions. A classroom reading-responding activity concerning signs and posters found in a typical city might be designed (Se Prohibe Fumar; Prohibido Pasar; Défense de Fumer; Défense d'Afficher). This takes the learner into a functional area with a meaning beyond the typical "infinitive

used as the second verb in a sequence." Moreover, it applies to some of the first sights a student traveler would encounter in a real target-language experience.

While lexical items carry most referential meaning, other kinds of meaning are conveyed by morphological and syntactic features. Wilkins (1976) has provided a list of notions that can serve as a useful reference. While he deals with English language forms, the categories of meaning may be universal, particularly at the beginning levels. He separates notions into three categories:

(1) Semantico-grammatical notions. These are expressed through lexical and grammatical features, and include time, quantity, space, relational meaning, and deixis (refers what is said to the context in which it is said, as in the case of the pronoun system's referring to the participants in the communicative exchange). Each of these categories is further composed of subclassifications. For example, time includes points of time (now, last Monday), duration (all day, for three weeks), time relations (the relations between events and points of time or other events, generally expressed by verb endings and auxiliaries), frequency (on Tuesdays, every day), and sequence (finally, next).

(2) Categories of modal meanings. There are two scales: (a) a scale of certainty, which subsumes certainty, probability, possibility, nil certainty, conviction, conjecture, doubt, and disbelief; and (b) a scale of commitment on the part of the subject, including intention and obligation.

(3) Communicative functions. For this category, there is no direct relationship between meaning and specific lexical or grammatical forms. The subclassifications are judgment and evaluation, suasion, argument, rational inquiry and explanation, personal emotions, and emotional relations. These categories can help identify the meanings that are signaled by grammatical forms.

In Tables 2 and 3, we list examples of major points of grammar taken from typical French and Spanish texts and match them with their salient meanings. Suggestions are given for the presentation of each meaning for receptive and/or productive practice for a beginning or survival level (1), for an intermediate point (2), and for a more advanced stage (3). These levels do not refer to years of study; rather, they represent the cyclic approach to sequencing that teachers might use to spread the grammar into manageable units, to allow for reentry and increasing difficulty, and to find time for communicative practice with the most useful purposes. Since time blocks will

depend upon local needs and preferences, the numbers are arbitrary, indicating the order in which material can be practiced for receptive and productive use. Furthermore, they are flexible--adjustable to local conditions and individual preferences. For the instructor who feels it is necessary to cover all meanings that the text presents, the numbers might suggest which meanings have priority for communicative practice and which might have to remain at a level of mechanical mastery.

An example with descriptive adjectives--a large category of words and meanings as well as one with a series of formation rules--might include the following order for productive communication practice: At level 1, the most general meanings such as big, little, good, bad, and the primary colors would be taught, while level 2 would be more specific and include small, large, pretty good, disagreeable, and orange. At a more advanced stage, students might learn to use tiny, gigantic, suitable, wicked, and mauve. Likewise, preterit or passé composé verb forms would be spread over three levels, with the most essential (ate, saw, studied, did) taught first and the slightly less common (cooked, jumped, screamed, brought) left for a revisit. Finally, a more advanced level might add more specific, less widely used terms (baked, scribbled, crawled). In all cases, advancement in the cycle also offers opportunities for reviewing the grammatical structure or expanding the rules, as new notions are added. Mastery is more likely to occur than when the past tense is done all at once, then ignored in teaching, except for error correction, until the third year when all the grammar is reviewed all over again.

Stage 3: Selection of Functions to Be Practiced

When possible, functions should be selected according to carefully conceived principles, such as the immediacy of need, transferability to a wide range of situations, the interests and preferences of students, and the transparency of the "match" between grammar points or vocabulary and functions. For tourists, the first survival needs would be for food and shelter, and students do enjoy preparing for travel, either real or imaginary. For beginners in academic programs, however, the first need should be to express themselves in the classroom, in interaction with each other and with the teacher, since this is the only authentic communication--using the language for their own real purposes--that learners are afforded in classrooms. Its value should not be overlooked in an effort to "cover the material," as if real communication were a barrier to efficiency. It is the teacher's task to establish and maintain an atmosphere in which basic purposes are fulfilled through the use of the target language. This may be done by setting rules at the beginning; by making it a game with a rewards system; by

TABLE 2

Points of Grammar, Meanings, and Ordering for Functional Practice

Point of Grammar	Meanings	Suggested Level for Functional Practice	
		Receptive	Productive
Subject pronouns	Agents of actions	1	1
Plural forms	Number	1	1
Articles	Determination of general or specific persons, objects	1	1
Present tense verbs	Actions in progress	1	1
	Habituality	1	1
	Timeless truths	1	2
	Conditional actions (Si . . .)	2	2
	Future action	2	2
Infinitives	Nature of the event	1	1
	Dependent action (unconjugated verb)	1	1
	Command, instruction	2	3
Negation	Absence of action	1	1
	Nothing, no one, never	1,2	1,2
	No longer, not at all	2	3
Interrogation	Yes/No questions	1	1,2
	Information questions: location, origin, time, agent, manner, instrument, object	1	1,2

Point of Grammar	Meanings	Suggested Level for Functional Practice	
		Receptive	Productive
Descriptive adjectives	Number, color, goodness, size, nationality, personality	1,2,3	1,2,3
Near future (aller + inf., ir a + inf.)	Futurity	1	1
Immediate past (venir de + inf., acabar de + inf.,)	Past actions	1	1
Il y a, Hay	Existence	1	1
Prepositions	Motion toward	1	1
	Motion away from	1	1
	Possession	1	1
	Relationships in space, time	1	1
Possessive forms	Possession		
Adjectives		1	1
Pronouns		2	2,3
Demonstratives	Relative location		
Adjectives		1	1
Pronouns		2	2

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Point of Grammar	Meanings	Suggested Level for Functional Practice	
		Receptive	Productive
Past tenses			
Passé composé, Preterit	Past completed action Past action begun	1,2	1,2,3
Imperfect	Past habitual action	1	1
	Past ongoing action	1	1
	Descriptive past action	1,2	2,3
	Past emotional states	1,2	2,3
Contrast of tenses	Single past events (beginning, end) vs. repeated, continual events or states (middle)	1,2	2,3
Adverbs	Relations in time, space, manner	1,2	1,2,3
Comparatives	Greater-lesser, equality	1,2,3	2,3
Superlatives	Greatest-least	1,2,3	2,3
Direct object pronouns	Done-to, direct receiver of action	1	2,3
Indirect object pronouns	Involved entity; indirect receiver of action	1,2	2,3
Disjunctive pronouns	Referent of preposition (other meanings in French in Table 3)	1	2
Expressions of time	Duration (depuis, il y a + present; hacer, etc.)	1	2
	Ago	1	2
Imperatives	Commands, requests	1,2,3	1,2,3

Point of Grammar	Meanings	Suggested Level for Functional Practice	
		Receptive	Productive
Reflexive verbs	Doer and done-to as same	1	1
	Reciprocal action	1	2
	Idiomatic meanings	1,2	1,2,3
	Passive action	2,3	3
Expressions of necessity (*il faut; tener que*)	Necessity, requirement, obligation	1	1
Future tense	Futurity	2,3	3
Conditional	Contrary-to-fact	2,3	3
	Planned action from past	2,3	3
Past perfect	Action previous to past point	2	3
Conjunctions	Relations among entities and events: addition,	1	1
	reason, cause-and-effect,	1,2,3	1,2,3
	negation, simultaneity	2,3	2,3
Pronouns	Referring to:		
Relative	who, which, that, etc.	1,2	2,3
Interrogative	who? what? which one? etc.	1,2,3	1,2,3
Indefinite	someone, something	1,2	2,3
Si clauses	Conditionality-result	1,2	2,3
Sequence of tenses	Relations of events expressed	1,2,3	1,2,3
Subjunctive	Volition	1,2,3	2,3
	Influence		
	Doubt, uncertainty		
	Emotion		

TABLE 3

Language-Specific Points of Grammar and Meanings:
Spanish and French

Point of Grammar (Spanish)	Meanings	Suggested stage in cycle	
		Receptive	Productive
Ser forms	Connector-equality	1	1
	Origin	1	1
	Possession	1	1
	Time telling	1	1
	Material	1	2
	Location of events	2	3
	Passive voice	3	3
Estar forms	Health	1	1
	Location of entities	1	1
	Progressive action	1,2	2,3
Ser vs. estar	Description	1	1
Personal a	Humanness of object	1	1

Gustar	Liking	1,2	1,2
Perfect tenses			
Present	Previous to present point	1	2
Past	Previous to past point	2	3
Uses of se	Reciprocity	1	2
	Involved entity	2,3	3
	Extra effort in action	3	3
Point of Grammar (French)			
Partitive	Portion of object	1,2	1,2
	Mass vs. count	1,2	1,2
Disjunctive pronouns	Emphasis, stress	1	1,2
	Self	1	2
Causative	Causal relationship between subject/object	2	3
Passé simple	Past completed action	2	Never

making it fun to speak the target language; by disguising the classroom with realia, posters, etc.; by forming an elite "club" of language students, for whom it is a special privilege to speak a language that others do not know; etc.

In addition to such basic universal functions as greetings and leave-takings, students carry out specialized functions: asking for information and clarification, expressing knowledge and lack of knowledge, asking permission, borrowing and lending items, following instructions, and exchanging ideas. Each teacher knows the communicative needs of his or her students, and can analyze the text material for its usefulness and design activities to help learners carry out those purposes in the target language.

Beyond this real communication, learners can practice functions applicable to a wide range of circumstances: requesting and imparting information; describing; relating events; expressing needs and feelings, likes and dislikes; sharing secrets and other information about their families, friends, jobs, dates, social activities, pastimes, successes and failures, pets, etc.; talking about trifles (time, weather, current happenings); and talking on the telephone. Again, the choice of functions may be greatly determined by the vocabulary presented in the text. Teachers can analyze existing material for its functional potential; lessons centered about gustar and popular activities or ser with adjectives describing people could be easily adapted.

From the beginning, sociolinguistic factors affecting the successful execution of communicative purposes can be integrated into the receptive purposes in order to give learners the opportunity to observe, identify, and discuss the relationships, attitudes, ages, and sex of the participants, the situations in which they find themselves, the topics, and the types of speech acts that influence the forms that are chosen. (For example, after listening to a dialogue in which people get to know each other through small talk, students may be asked to note the forms that were used and discuss the reasons for the use of these forms rather than others, and the different ways in which other people in other situations might have carried out the same function.)

As students advance, their needs and interests spread to ever broader and more specialized topics and functions. People gossip and tell stories, keep informed of the news of the day, write personal and business letters, complain and advise, and interact on more intimate levels. At the same time, the functions, like the points of grammar and their meanings, can be spiraled, so that, for example, at various points during the

course, one might deal with "identifying and asking for identification" at increasing levels of complexity and specificity. Very early in the program, the text may feature the names of classroom objects and articles and examples of asking for the names of things; these may be practiced in combination as learners identify objects in the room. Later, they may move on to more specific classroom objects, then to identifying foods, clothing, animals, etc. Much later, they may polish their skills and carry out more specialized functions such as identifying and explaining office machines, musical instruments, medical tools, clothing accessories, or literary genres. Likewise, the sociolinguistic factors affecting communicative exchanges can be increasingly integrated into both receptive and productive purposes.

While extensive inventories of language functions are available elsewhere (Coste et al. 1976, van Ek and Alexander 1977, Munby 1978), we have devised lists of communicative purposes for each of the four skills in terms translatable to classroom teaching/learning practices (see Tables 4 and 5). They are meant as checklists for teachers planning a variety of opportunities to assure practice in carrying out purposes with material under study. Teachers will need to select the functions that are most appropriate to the needs and interests of their students, most useful (i.e., most generalizable to a wide range of situations), and most easily adapted to the material in the text. The next step will be to cross-reference the functions that have been selected with the grammar points, vocabulary items, and meanings to be expressed. The checklists may serve as a means of assuring that a variety of essential functions receive attention, but they may be expanded or reduced, to make them more useful for particular teaching situations. One approach to using the lists might be to check the purposes that are most essential or interesting, then make a notation of the lesson and/or page numbers where each one would be appropriate.

Stage 4: Adapting, Selecting, and Designing Learning Activities for Communication

Textbooks often provide few activities for communication, either "real" or "realistic," although the more recent materials are moving in that direction. Realistic communication practice takes place when one listens, speaks, reads, and/or writes for a particular purpose, to fill a need. Realistic practice, such as role playing, tries to simulate real communication; to the degree that learners become personally involved in the roles, such exchanges may be "nearly real." Textbooks typically provide extensive mechanical practice for manipulating language forms and structures, and most include

TABLE 4

Common Purposes of Language Use

Speaking and Listening

1. Socializing

- Greeting others
- Taking leave; planning to meet again
- Introducing and meeting people
- Making small talk--weather, time, health, current events
- Getting to know others--sharing likes and dislikes, experiences, successes, ideas, pastimes, opinions
- Issuing invitations, and accepting or declining
- Paying visits and receiving visitors
- Offering food, drink, and entertainment, and accepting or declining
- Sharing leisure activities--parties, games, movies, concerts, plays, TV programs, sports events
- Joking, telling jokes, responding to jokes
- Flirting, responding (or not) to flirting
- Telling and listening to stories; recounting events
- Gossiping
- Expressing feelings politely; reacting to others' expressions of feelings
- Apologizing and reacting to apologies
- Displaying accomplishments; bragging
- Making social plans--parties, picnics, meetings, dances
- Reporting and responding to plans, intentions, purposes, expectations; attempting to perceive others' intentions
- Betting, expressing suppositions

2. Establishing and Maintaining Closer Relationships

- Sharing secrets
- Sharing personal values, ideas, beliefs, hopes, plans, desires, dreams, and problems; learning about others' values, feelings, ideas
- Expressing intentions; perceiving and responding to others' intentions
- Making promises and commitments; interpreting others' promises and commitments
- Teasing, and reacting to teasing
- Expressing personal feelings and expressing reactions (sympathy, understanding, mutuality) to others' feelings

- Apologizing and responding to apologies
- Extending and accepting invitations

3. Placing Barriers between Oneself and Others, and Listening and Reacting to Such Attempts

- Hiding feelings
- Hiding intentions
- Expressing differences
- Rejecting advances
- Getting rid of unwanted callers
- Avoiding commitments
- Breaking off relationships
- Presenting excuses and justifications
- Bluffing
- Getting away from situations and people

4. Influencing Others' Actions, and Perceiving and Responding to Such Attempts

- Requesting that others perform actions
- Requesting and giving permission
- Asking for help or support, and responding
- Hinting for favors
- Offering favors, help, or support, and accepting or declining
- Ordering, commanding, or demanding
- Begging and imploring
- Forbidding and prohibiting others' actions
- Giving and responding to instructions
- Guiding others' actions
- Giving advice; making suggestions and recommendations
- Issuing warnings
- Encouraging and discouraging others
- Setting deadlines for others' actions

5. Giving and Responding to Feedback

- Expressing and acknowledging compliments, congratulations, praise, gratitude, appreciation, admiration
- Expressing and responding to complaints, chastisement, criticism
- Insulting and reacting to insults
- Making and responding to accusations
- Flattering and responding to flattery

6. Arguing

- Agreeing, disagreeing, disputing
- Pursuading, convincing

- Threatening
- Negotiating
- Compromising, conceding a point
- "Making up," forgiving

7. Talking One's Way Out of Trouble, Avoiding Trouble, and Perceiving Others' Attempts

- Denying guilt or responsibility
- Explaining
- Blaming others
- Making excuses
- Lying
- Hedging
- Presenting alibis
- Hiding or twisting the truth or motives; softening the truth

8. Requesting, Reporting, Receiving, and Processing Information

- Seeking and reporting facts
- Paraphrasing and summarizing
- Identifying and seeking identification--objects, people, places, events, actions--by name, description, ownership
- Describing, and requesting descriptions
- Defining, and asking for definitions
- Clarifying and elaborating, and asking for clarifications and elaborations
- Explaining and asking for explanations--facts and relationships (quantity, space, motion, time, cause-effect)
- Finding out how something works; explaining how something works
- Requesting, giving, and receiving directions and instructions
- Explaining purposes and intentions; perceiving purposes and intentions
- Expressing and receiving opinions
- Comparing and contrasting
- Drawing conclusions
- Making predictions
- Discussing possibilities and probabilities
- Discussing and debating ideas
- Making plans--projects, events, presentations, etc.
- Evaluating--a plan, progress toward a goal, a product or production, events, actions, appearances; reacting to evaluations
- Making and expressing decisions

- Expressing doubts or indecision
- Solving problems and puzzles
- Hypothesizing

9. Specific Situations and Skills

- Functioning in the classroom
- Communicating by telephone
- Selling, buying, bargaining
- Acting in emergencies
- Making appointments and consulting medical personnel
- Interpreting and translating
- Traveling--making and confirming reservations, arranging documents, eating in restaurants, etc.

10. Special Listening Situations

- Listening to the radio: music, news, soap operas, stories, sportscasts, weather reports, discussions, talk shows
- Watching and listening to television: variety shows, opera, soap operas, movies, situation comedies, news, weather reports, documentaries, discussions, interviews, talk shows, movie and book reviews, sportscasts
- Attending the theater: comedies, tragedies, musicals
- Attending concerts
- Listening to records and tape recordings: music, stories, cultural presentations, messages from people in other countries

TABLE 5

Common Purposes of Language Use

Reading and Writing

1. Identifying Objects, Places, People

- Naming streets, buildings, stores, airlines, places
- Naming products, labeling
- Locating departments, offices, people
- Marking entrances, exits, lines, stops, stations

2. Indicating Conventions

- Instructing in do's and don't's of behavior
- Informing about hours, days, prices of operations
- Requesting fill-in information on forms
- Outlining procedures for daily tasks

3. Giving Directions, Following Instructions

- Reading and making maps
- Interpreting and giving instructions for using something
- Stating procedures on how to make, assemble something
- Stating how to diagnose a problem and/or how to solve one

4. Informing and Collecting Information for Decision Making

- Announcing events
- Giving schedules
- Offering choices
- Describing objects, people, ideas, options
- Influencing and appealing to tastes
- Buying, selling, and advertising

5. Seeking Knowledge, Sharing Knowledge

- Describing what has happened, is happening, will happen in society
- Locating and relating facts about topics (personal, local, national, international)
- Receiving and giving opinions
- Interpreting and answering questionnaires, polls, surveys
- Evaluating information and receiving evaluations
- Responding to information
- Getting and giving advice
- Learning new content, expanding knowledge on given topics
- Outlining facts, making generalizations
- Corresponding for personal or business reasons

6. Establishing and Maintaining Relationships

- Greeting and receiving formally and informally
- Taking leave formally and informally
- Exchanging news, "small talk"
- Sharing opinions, likes, dislikes, experiences
- Describing and comprehending descriptions of events, people, objects, lifestyles
- Inquiring, and answering questions
- Accepting, extending, and rejecting informal and formal invitations
- Receiving and sending cards (printed) and personal notes
- Interpreting and extending telegraphic messages
- Complaining, apologizing, making excuses, blaming

7. Satisfying Curiosity

- Requesting information on a topic and interpreting it
- Reading gossip
- Looking up information
- Interpreting predictions
- Using minimal information to locate interesting stories, articles

8. Pursuing Enjoyment

- Following instructions for a game, sport
- Learning about interesting people, events
- Selecting programs to hear, see, attend
- Acting in a play
- Finding words to a song, singing
- Responding to jokes, exchanging them
- Reading or writing a story, letter, article
- Interpreting descriptions of books, plays, movies, records
- Expanding knowledge or interests
- Following directions for making something for pleasure, pursuing a hobby

9. Reading for Pleasure and Literary Analysis / Writing for Creative Expression or in a Professional Way

- Reading and interpreting novels, short stories, drama, poems
- Pursuing criticism of literary movements, styles, etc.
- Reading biographies, history, science fiction
- Composing for publication
- Criticizing literary works and theories
- Debating ideas and interpretations
- Deriving pleasure from the written word

Special Reading Sources

- Words and phrases on everyday signs and labels
- Notes to self and from personal acquaintances, friends, family
- Public information: announcements, newspapers, magazines
- Informative sources for in-depth knowledge: magazines, newspapers, books, dictionaries, encyclopedias, almanacs
- Abbreviated materials: classified ads, schedules, telegrams, headlines
- Written backup for oral messages: subtitles, weather maps on television reports, printed schedules while talking by phone or in person

exercises that require learners to think about the meanings being expressed as well. Some do have communicative question/answer or opinion questions to which students respond with their own piece of information, and a few include group activities, conversational situations, role playing, and communication games. Typically, however, the question/answer activities remain rather restrictive because the questions leave little room for breadth or variety in answer and because the only purpose is to do the exercise and practice the structure.

A truly communicative exercise should (1) involve students in expressive or receptive activity aimed at one or more communicative purposes and (2) require or allow for creative expression or receptive expansion that encourages the student to reach slightly beyond his or her repertoire. This also provides an opportunity for the teacher to identify and supply language items individual students would require in functional situations. A pool of items relevant for specific communicators can be drawn up (e.g., vocabulary that relates to the interests of 14-year-old Coloradans or undergraduate home economics majors). Whether teachers need to design complete exercises or merely adapt for their students will depend upon the textbook.

Feedback on the effectiveness of learners' efforts to achieve particular purposes can also be built into the activities. For listening and reading exercises, students' interpretations of what they hear and read can often be evaluated by the teacher in the light of rules and conventions of the target culture. We often "hear what we want to hear" and see what we are conditioned to see by our own underlying cultural assumptions. Likewise, in speaking and writing activities, teachers can lead learners to consider the effects on their potential audiences of their chosen modes of expression. This depends, of course, upon the teacher's knowledge about the sociolinguistic conventions surrounding specific exchanges in particular situations. Care needs to be taken, however, to avoid overgeneralizations and other misinformation. While extreme rudeness is identifiable, most rules of politeness are not absolute; even rules of usage for familiar and polite verb forms are breaking down in countries where French and Spanish are spoken. The most important objective may be to sensitize learners in a general way to the importance of the possible effects of their attempts to communicate.

Categories of Activities

The hierarchy of communicative activities shown in Table 6 begins with real communication about the here and now of the classroom and expands to more imaginative and abstract situa-

TABLE 6

A Hierarchy of Communicative Activities: "Real" to "Realistic"

Real Communication ↑

1. Classroom behavior
2. Out-of-class assignments requiring communication, especially with native speakers
3. Communication with "non-school" guests, especially native speakers
4. Communication about students' lives and experiences outside of class
5. Communication about current events and other topics of mutual interest
6. Translocation, in which students pretend to be in other situations
7. Role-playing, in which both situation and roles are imagined but plausible

9. Game Playing ↕

8. Make-believe, in which situation and roles are beyond the realm of the plausible

↓ Realistic Practice

tions and topics. Once again, the categories serve as a checklist to assure variety and student involvement. There may be advantages to each of the categories. It has been shown that language acquisition in natural settings is effective, and real communicative purposes may provide some of that environment. On the other hand, there is no evidence at present that real language use is more or less effective than either realistic communicative practice or fanciful make-believe for foreign language learning in a classroom setting. It may be that some students are more comfortable with fantastic, imaginary situations than with real-life communication, thereby becoming more involved in language practice.

We will explain briefly each of the categories of activities.

Category 1. Classroom behavior. When students carry out immediate purposes in the classroom, that is, greet one another and the teacher, request information or clarification, ask permission, follow oral or written instructions, and express knowledge or understanding (or lack of it), they engage in real communication. The purposeful language use is the only oppor-

tunity for real communication in the clasroom from the earliest stages of instruction. In addition to these intellectual needs, learners will want to express feelings (I don't feel well; I'm/he's embarrassed), make excuses (I didn't have time to do my homework), borrow and lend items, write notes and graffiti, ask for help, and make accusations. A great deal of communicating takes place among students, and some teachers are able to establish a psychological atmosphere--through encouragement, insistence, and creating a special physical environment--in which much of the extraneous communication is conducted in the target language.

Models of expressions for the most common remarks and exchanges can be practiced first, and students can be rewarded for their target language efforts. This practice may be infinitely more valuable than some early textbook exercises. Furthermore, many of these expressions incorporate material that is studied in preliminary lessons. For example, many classroom needs can be met through the use of the verb to be (I'm sick; she's smart), the verb to have (I don't/didn't have time), regular verbs in the present tense (I study every night), or verbs with infinitives (Can you help me?). Written information can be included: assignments on the board, fire drill instructions in the target language, comments on homework papers.

Clearly, practice should not be limited to this category of activities, as it deals only with classroom-related topics and purposes. The other categories allow students to expand their ability, for each stage on the scale moves from classroom reality into increasingly abstract topics, situations, and roles.

Category 2. Out-of-class assignments. At any level, students can be asked to carry out particular activities with native or near-native speakers outside the classroom. Other teachers and members of their families could be involved, and in cities or areas where immigrants have settled or foreign visitors spend time, teachers would have little trouble establishing contacts; these people are often pleased to help students learn to communicate in their own tongue. If necessary, contacts can be made with people who live farther away, and exchanges can be achieved by telephone, ham radio, tape recordings, and/or postcards and letters.

Once they have practiced among themselves, students can test their skills with native speakers. Some of the early functions, such as greeting people, asking about their health, making small talk, and taking leave will be practiced during every exchange. There may also be cross-skill practice; for example, greetings may be given orally or in letters (with at-

tention to necessary changes imposed by writing conventions). Students can also request orally or in writing information about a holiday or other aspect of life in the native speaker's home country, invite the person to a school function or event, present a "news report" on school or class events, interview the person about his or her life or exerience learning English, offer to help with his or her English or problems encountered in the United States, discuss current events, request help with class projects, express gratitude for information or help, etc.

These activities require careful planning by the teacher, who has to establish and keep up contacts, and, in some cases, arrange for the communication in advance and inform native speakers about the learners, their purposes, and the ways in which they can be helped. While this coordination consumes energy and time, it is well worth the effort, for it is a first step with real use of the language. Students also learn about the sociocultural conventions governing oral and written exchanges in the target culture.

Category 3. Communication with invited guests. An advantage of this category over the previous one is that the teacher has more control of the situation and can spend less time coordinating the activities. It also places less of a burden on the guests. Native speakers, fellow teachers, exchange students, and advanced students of the language can be invited to be classroom guests (preferably by the learners, because that process carries out a communicative purpose). The teacher should prepare guests and students for the encounter. Students can interview guests, and vice versa, as a means of getting to know each other and sharing information. With the aid of written as well as oral materials, guests can be asked to demonstrate how things are done in their country: dancing, cooking, gestures, greetings and leave takings, signatures, number writing, and such mathematical computations as long division (André 1973).

Several guests might be invited for the same day, so that the class can work in small groups for closer communication. Traditionally, teachers have required students to prepare questions for their guests as a whole-class activity; learners should feel more free to communicate in smaller groups. For reading/writing practice, groups might summarize their sessions in short articles and exchange them with or publish them for other classes.

Category 4. Communication about students' lives outside of class. This category includes the typical question/answer exercise. (How many brothers and sisters do you have? When is your birthday? What TV shows do you like? What did you do

during vacation?) Communication implies a two-way exchange, however, and students can ask questions of each other through the use of conversation and interview cards (see Bonin and Birckbichler 1975) or original questions, the answers to which they are really interested in knowing.

These kinds of information exchanges might take up functions such as making plans, displaying accomplishments, sharing secrets, making promises, apologizing, giving and receiving advice, complaining, congratulating, or any others that touch topics close to students' lives.

These activities can easily encompass all four skills as learners express their information on paper or orally, and they can read each other's written work (notes, letters, questionnaires, reports) and respond to spoken statements in several ways: by expressing agreement, disagreement, surprise, sympathy, pleasure, or displeasure; or by indicating comprehension or requesting clarification or expansion. Listening and reading are active processes that may be designed to trigger a realistic response. Opinion polls and questionnaires, for example, provide interesting reading experiences that concentrate on receptive language for input as well as output (e.g., checking a category or multiple-choice response).

Category 5. Communication about current events and other topics of mutual interest. Category 5 differs from the first four in its increased abstraction, as learners deal with ideas, things, and events that interest them but do not necessarily involve them personally. The content of the communication is expanded, and opportunities for exposure to authentic listening and reading materials are numerous.

Some of the functions that lend themselves to practice in this area are reporting and discussing current events, giving and receiving instructions, sharing information, betting, discussing values, persuading, gossiping, explaining how something works, describing, expressing opinions, and making predictions.

For categories 1 through 5, activities and functions are virtually synonymous, as students carry out functions closely related to their own lives with very little pretending. Categories 6, 7, and 8 require more imagination on the part of the teacher as well as the students, in order to create conditions that will involve the class in a variety of purposes and situations.

Category 6. Translocation. Functions impossible to carry out within the confines of the classroom require either field projects (category 2) or pretending. In translocation exer-

cises, students retain their identity but imagine that they are somewhere else, communicating with someone outside the classroom. Any of the functions can be performed with this approach. Learners can be transported in their imagination to interact with anyone, anywhere in the universe.

Some examples of Category 6 activities:

. A French person stops you on the street and asks directions from the bus station to the nearest post office. Tell him/her how to get there. You are now at the bus station. (A map may be provided.) A reading variation would give the directions and provide a map upon which the student traces the route.
. You have been chosen to spend a year in Tucumán, Argentina, as an exchange student, and you have just received the name and address of the family with whom you will be living. Write them a letter introducing yourself.
. You are now an exchange student in Argentina. The local Rotary Club has invited you to tell about your home state and city. Present your speech to them. A written variation would require an article for a school or community newsletter.

Category 7. Role-playing. The next step from reality involves the student's pretending to be another person. There is no limit to the roles/situations that can be practiced, as long as they are plausible and involve purposes that students might really carry out at some future time. For example, in this category they might role-play astronauts but not creatures from outer space. These activities are frequently effective with learners who are personally shy and yet creative. Young students might work with puppets or figures cut out from magazines.

Some examples of this category:

. Half of the class pretends to be the Argentinian Rotary Club members who attend the talks given by the other half (as in Category [6] above). They ask questions and discuss informally which students gave the best presentation.
. Students write letters to an "Ann Landers" and then answer one another's letters by pretending to be the columnist.
. Students pretend to be teachers in a faculty meeting and discuss ways to improve the school.

Category 8. Make-believe. All those role-playing situations beyond the humanly plausible fall into this group. For example, students pretend to be the tortoise in the race with the hare and state what they plan to do to win (Christensen 1975). These activities can be most entertaining and stimulating, as there is no limit to learners' imaginative approaches, other than language proficiency. While the activities do not necessarily prepare learners directly for purposeful functioning, they may be effective for developing self-confidence and overall proficiency. It should be recognized, however, that many teachers and some students may not be comfortable in these situations.

Category 9. Games. In reality, game playing does not form a separate category, since many of the activities suggested may be transformed into games by offering rewards. For most, rules can be devised to make the activity competitive. The challenge of competition often adds a motivational feature to learning activities of all kinds, causing students to become more personally involved. At the same time, students tend to lose sight of the communicative purpose as they fix their attention on winning the game. Teachers will need to devise rules that restrict the functions to their most useful form and reward those who "do it right."

Analyzing, Adapting, and Supplementing the Textbook

Provision of sufficient purposeful practice in all four skills requires adaptation of the text, and selection and design of supplementary materials. Some text exercises can be readily adapted to communicative practice, while others require complete transformation or substitution. In each new lesson, the exercises should be assessed for their adaptability; wherever communication practice is deficient, new activities and material should be selected to fill the gap.

Adaptation

Before needlessly reinventing the text, the teacher should analyze the content to see how minimal changes can make it more communication oriented. The checklists of meanings, functions, and activity types can be utilized in this process. As far as grammar is concerned, one might evaluate the form and parameters of explanations and exercises by asking: What are the uses presented for various grammar points? Are these uses functional or strictly structural? If meanings are not presented, what are some functional meanings I might introduce? Are there skill differences not recognized by the text? For example, are the exercises solely productive without tapping

the students' ability to interpret tense, pronoun referents, comparisons? Are there alternative forms for expressing a single meaning that would be worth dividing into active/recognition categories? Do the exercises run the gamut from mechanical to meaningful to communicative? If there are communicative exercises, are they also purposeful, or can they easily be made so? Finally, does the text lend itself to an adaptation process that would attach a language purpose to the grammatical topic?

Vocabulary presentations are also amenable to adaptation for purposeful language use. In functional/notional syllabi, lexical items are chosen for their usefulness in specific language situations. While this may not have been a governing principle in general texts, vocabulary is a facet that can be regularly adapted by the teacher. In evaluating vocabulary presentations, one might ask: Is there a thematic grouping of vocabulary items? If so, they are "notional" and need only be made "functional." Is there an attempt to separate vocabulary into recognition/active categories? While such a division is helpful, the teacher will still need to amend actual items to what his or her students perceive as active in that it serves to express their ideas. Are there specific exercises/activities to practice vocabulary, or is there simply a listing of terms used throughout the chapter?

If one chooses to adapt the whole course and not just grammar and/or vocabulary, there are some questions to be asked about dialogues and reading selections. Is the dialogue situational or simply representative of future structures and vocabulary? Situational dialogues tend to fit more neatly into functional practice, but the others may portray speakers in a communicative endeavor. Does the dialogue lend itself to personalization so that the student may use it as a point of departure? Does the dialogue represent "real" language, or is it formalized and mismatched with the social roles of the fictitious speakers or actual students? Does it have the potential to express notions or purposes in the language, if it does not already do so? Reading selections should be studied to see if they are purposeful. Is the only purpose of the selection to rework the chapter content? Or is it an adaptation of authentic material or an experience with realia? Is the reading primarily informative or for pleasure? Are there alternative reading materials that would be more purposeful within the same thematic and structural confines?

In pursuing these questions, the teacher can identify both the material to be adapted and some of the ways in which that might be achieved. It need not be done all at once, but as one

becomes more familiar with purposes, they begin to suggest themselves, as it were, when materials are analyzed with that goal in mind.

Selection and Design

As demonstrated in the list of sources at the end of this paper, there is no lack of stimulating ideas for oral communicative activities in the professional literature. In acquiring ideas, teachers find that there is a "snowballing" effect: the more learning activities one gathers, the more readily one invents others. These ideas are then adapted to particular language items and to the needs, preferences, and abilities of specific classes, courses, and students.

As an example of this snowballing effect, we may take a grammar point whose acquisition typically requires a great deal of practice: the "simple" past tense forms. Initially, the teacher might try textbook exercises (if they are communicative) as well as ideas gleaned from a methods course or article, such as the chain story idea (Morgenstern 1976). These activities then stimulate the teacher's imagination to create several others. The following are some possibilities for attaching purposes and activities to the simple past in all four skills (from Guntermann and Phillips 1981):

Listening and Speaking

Purpose	Activity
Recounting the events of one's day	Students role-play in small "family" groups at the dinner table. Each recounts highlights of his or her day. The others ask questions and make comments. Each may invent or be assigned a personality, attitudes, feelings, and intentions that he or she must express (speaking). The other members of the class may judge the success with which the roles are carried out (listening).
Finding out information about past events	Students are given lists of information that they must gather, either from their own experience or by asking questions of others. Examples: Find out who won the

	college basketball game, who went with Debbie to the movies last night, where the teacher ate lunch, in what year Napoleon died, where Columbus was born, etc. The first to finish correctly wins (listening, speaking, and taking notes).
Identifying others' purposes	Students listen to a tape recording of native speakers' statements using past tense forms and analyze their purposes (in the native language at beginning levels). Sample taped utterances: Boy to girl--I saw you at the disco with Fred last night. Son to mother--I didn't do it. Sister to brother--Who put the frog in my purse? Mother to son--Did you clean your room? (A context may also be given for each taped utterance.)
Understanding the answers to one's own queries	Students work in pairs. One reads aloud a simple story written in the past tense, but in a confused way. The other must ask questions for clarifications. The first student has a list of facts that can be used to clarify points in answer to the questions. The second must then retell the story to the group (listening and speaking).

Reading and Writing

Purpose	Activity
Recounting personal events	Students establish a pen pal in a foreign country or a secret pal in their (or another) classroom. They write notes/letters in which they recount/interpret school events, family events, or things that have happened to them (reading and writing).

Locating facts about topics	Students select a topic from a list such as a sporting event, a political event, a crime, a human interest story. They go to an FL newspaper and find an article on their topic; they then pull information to be listed under <u>who</u>, <u>where</u>, <u>when</u>, <u>what</u>, <u>how</u> (reading).
Understanding a problem, offering a solution	Students read "advice column" types of problems presented in the past tense, designed by the teacher or adapted from a magazine. Students offer a solution to demonstrate their understanding. (Note: The solution may not necessitate a past tense response; real communication permits alternatives.)
Describing what has happened	Students use old postcards or make one to send another student or pen pal. They describe a trip taken to the place pictured. Cards can be posted on the bulletin board, and students can summarize by tallying how many different ways classmates spent their vacation (reading and writing).
Following directions	A text passage in which a trip is described is traced on a map to demonstrate comprehension of significant points on the journey (reading).
Writing for enjoyment	During a vacation break, students are encouraged to submit a daily journal; this could be a week during the school year; it could be tied to culture in an activity where students could assume the personality of a foreign artist, historical figure, etc. (writing).

Several principles should guide the selection, adaptation, and design of activities for communicative practice: (1) a variety of types of activities should be sought, representing as many of the nine categories as possible, so as to meet the needs and interests of students with various learning styles

and preferences; (2) the activities should involve the greatest number of students to the greatest degree, that is, all learners should have maximum opportunity for practice; (3) attention should be paid to the level of instruction and the possibilities for cyclical arrangement of the language items under consideration. (Five activities with the past tense spread over a semester are more effective than doing them all when the past tense is first studied.)

3. APPLICATION OF THE MODEL FOR FUNCTIONAL PRACTICE

This section consists of numerous examples of purposeful language activities that may be derived by attaching meanings and functions to points of grammar in basic text series. If the grammar is made communicative, vocabulary is also incorporated as a by-product. Grammar is the core of most texts--consequently most courses--and it can be mastered to the greatest extent in a mechanical sense. When students use structures to communicate, they have the best chance of becoming truly proficient in their use, for their performance will identify essential vocabulary, utilize authentic reading materials, and perhaps eliminate the need for dialogues other than as exemplary language.

The examples given here are random samples meant to serve as a demonstration of the planning process described in the preceding sections. An effort has been made to apply the most common, useful functions and notions, appropriate to the level at which these grammatical features are typically presented in textbooks.[1] Teachers might use these suggested activities or adapt them by changing any component to match their students' abilities and preferences; it is important, however, to keep in mind that the name of the game is variety, whether selecting activities or purposes.

In the following examples, the functions listed are taken from the common-purposes inventory given earlier; the activi-

[1]Many of the functions are chosen because a given purpose is an outgrowth of the grammar point. For example, in the first sample, using the present tense to describe habitual actions leads rather directly to "learning about other ways of life." When we hear how a French or Spanish speaker spends his or her time, the present tense is widely used. There is often a fit between grammar point and function. For each grammar point, one can peruse the list of purposes to see which ones might fit, and ask, "How is grammar point x used to carry out purpose y?"

ties are selected from the nine categories discussed previously. The skills listed are the skills that are emphasized; it does not mean that other skills are not involved. Such artificial isolation of a skill would be unnatural, as would a separation of oral from written work. In the real world, we often read something, then speak about it, or write something to which a partner then listens. Similar crossing of skills will occur in many of these activities.

Grammar point: Present tense, regular or irregular verbs

Meaning: Habituality

Skills/ Functions/ Activities:

A. Listening/ Learning about other ways of life/ Communication on topics of interest

Students listen to accounts of typical days in the lives of people in the target culture (e.g., a teenager, a businessman, a housewife, a teacher) via a movie documentary, slide-tape presentation, filmstrip-slide presentation, or the teacher's voice. They then view the series again, attempt to re-narrate the activities themselves in the third person by speaking or writing, and discuss the style and the forms used by those particular teenagers as compared with those of other ages and sex.

B. Listening/ Learning how something works/ Communication on topics of interest

Students listen to a simplified account of how a machine works, how a game is played, how the work on an assembly line is performed, etc. (preferably while watching a demonstration of these functions). At a more advanced level, the oral description might be followed by multiple-choice responses naming the object described.

C. Speaking/ Exchanging personal information/ Communication about students' lives

Students make a list of questions they would like to ask others in the class about their daily lives. In groups of three, they pose their questions (a variation of the technique described in Bonin and Birckbichler 1975). They may be given feedback about the appropriateness of their questions within the target culture.

D. Speaking/ Gossiping/ Game

The class is divided into teams of four students each. Team 1 first tries to "fool" the rest of the class, who try to guess which member of the team is telling the truth about the person whose name has been given on small cards or slips of paper to all four team members. Only one has been given a true statement about this person; the others must invent plausible-sounding lies. After all four team members have made their statements about the person, they choose four other students in the class who try to guess who told the truth. (For most of the class, then, this would be a listening exercise.) The other teams then take turns trying to fool the class in the same manner, each with a different personality as a subject for "gossip."

E. Reading/ Sharing opinions, likes, and dislikes/ Communication about students' lives

Students list six of their favorite extra-class activities in a column on a piece of paper, without revealing their names. Next to the column are scales from always to never. The papers are passed among three or four other students, each of whom indicates on the scale the degree of his or her interest. (Student 1 uses a check-mark, Student 2 an x, etc. Or colored pencils can be used to identify respondents.) The original student looks over the responses and selects the person who would be an "ideal companion." To locate that person, codes can be used, or the exercise can continue with an oral search the next day.

F. Reading/ Interpreting information on a topic/ Communication on topics of interest

Students read job descriptions for various trades and professions. From a reference list, they note in the margin the profession they think is being described. They may make guesses at any point in the paragraph and change their minds as they proceed. Their final answer is circled.

G. Writing/ Describing lifestyle/ Communication about school life

Students write descriptions of life in their school. These are placed in an imaginary cornerstone of a new addition to the building (or a real one, if possible) with the idea that their product might be read in the future.

H. Writing/ Learning about interesting people/ Role playing

Students pretend they are TV characters and describe their habitual actions. They attempt to arrange sentences in an order from general to most specific or revealing. On an overhead transparency, they reveal their sentences one at a time to students who try and guess the character.

Grammar point: Near future (going to + verb; aller + infinitive; ir a + infinitive)

Meaning: Future actions and events

Skills/ Functions/ Activities:

A. Listening/ Discerning others' plans/ Communication about students' lives outside of class

Each student makes a statement about his or her plans for the next vacation (We are going to go to . . .; I'm going to sleep a lot) as a speaking/writing exercise. Plans are recorded on tape or read aloud by the teacher/aide/native speaker. As the class listens, they attempt to identify the author/speaker of each plan.

B. Listening/ Taking telephone messages/ Translocation

Students are given a "telephone call" in which the speaker leaves a message about his or her activities or whereabouts for the next few hours. (A child caller tells a mother several things that he will do, with her permission, after school; a father calls home to say he will be late, to describe what he will be doing, and to make some promises; a school friend calls to split up a class assignment.) Students take brief notes and then pretend to pass the information on to the intended person.

C. Speaking/ Planning a party/ Classroom communication

Students plan a party with food typical of the target culture. Each states what he or she is going to bring and tries to repeat in round-robin fashion what each preceding person will bring. At the end of the activity, each student makes a list of provisions and who is going to do what. The most accurate recaller becomes chairperson!

D. Speaking/ Solving problems while traveling/ Translocation

Students pretend to travel to a country where the foreign language is spoken. As they "tour," they are given problems to solve. (For example: You are invited to . . . ; are you going to accept? You are lost; what are you going to do? They solve the problem by stating what they are going to do in each case.) They may be given feedback on the possible results of their solutions.

E. Reading/ Interpreting predictions/ Communication about topics of interest

Students read horoscopes that use the near future construction (teacher-adapted or real). There are 12 groups, one for each sign. Students then consult one of the members specializing in the sign of his or her birthday. The "expert" summarizes orally or in writing a personalized horoscope.

F. Reading/ Making choices/ Translocation

Students imagine that they are invited to spend the Christmas holidays with three host families in a target language country. Students read the three letters of invitation in which each family describes what it is going to do, where it is going to go, etc. Students each then select the most appealing or interesting family. The teacher may provide additional information on places and customs, if asked.

G. Writing/ Sending cards and personal notes/ Communication about students' lives

Conducted before a card-sending holiday, this activity requires that students write on a card a personal note addressed to another student, native speaker, or teacher, relating how they intend to celebrate or spend the time around the holiday.

H. Writing/ Making promises/ Communication about students' lives

Students make a list of their resolutions for the New Year (or new semester). They do them in an "I'm going to . . ." fashion. They are posted on the bulletin board, and the student or a knowledgeable friend crosses out resolutions as they are broken. At the end of a month, reevaluation determines who was the most "resolved" class member.

Grammar point: Descriptive adjectives

Meaning: Personal characteristics; physical appearance, description

Skills/ Functions/ Activities:

A. Listening/Speaking/ Sharing personal values, feelings/ Communication about students' lives and experiences

From a list (one side masculine, one feminine) of adjectives of personality, students choose the three that best describe their own character and state them (I'm aggressive, energetic, and ambitious). They may then choose three statements in the negative mode (I'm not timid, stupid, or patient). When everyone has made statements, class members try to repeat what was said by saying, "I like _____ because she/he is/is not ____." The exercise may be done in small groups or by the entire class. It is also a good exercise for communication early in the year, for many of these words are cognates in Romance languages/English.

B. Speaking/ Complimenting and insulting others/ Classroom exchanges

Each student is given the name of another student as he or she enters the room. They are to compliment this person, using an adjective from a list provided by the teacher. Those who are complimented must respond appropriately. A few adjectives could be insulting; they should trigger appropriate responses as well. The teacher may indicate the kinds of statements that are compliments and insults in the target culture.

C. Reading/Writing/ Describing people/ Role playing

Students are given photographs of missing persons. They are to write APB's (All Points Bulletins) describing these people. Photos are then put on the bulletin board and APB's are shuffled and passed out to members of the class. (This can be done a day or so later if the teacher wishes to correct the students' drafts.) Readers then try to match bulletins with the correct photograph. (This may be expanded to four skills by having a student play the individual reporting a missing person to the police, who then transform the oral description into a written one.)

D. Reading/ Reading biographies/ Communication about topics of interest

Students read a descriptive paragraph or longer article at a more advanced level about a personality from the target culture. They then summarize by listing adjectives that describe that person's (1) physical appearance, (2) attitudes and personality, and (3) circumstances (e.g., nationality, occupation).

E. Writing/Reading/ Writing for creative expression/ Following directions/ Make-believe

Students imagine that they have just landed on Mars. They leave the spaceship and find themselves confronted by Martians. In their journal, they describe what these creatures looked like and how they acted. After the teacher checks the comprehensibility of the writing, papers can be redistributed and students can attempt to recreate the creatures described by drawing them.

Grammar point: Infinitives

Meaning: Nature of the event/commands

Skills/ Functions/ Activities:

A. Listening and speaking/ Sharing likes and dislikes/ Communication about students' lives

In round-robin fashion, a student states something he or she adores doing (J'adore voyager); the next repeats that infinitive and gives his or her opinion of it (Voyager? J'aime bien voyager . . .) and what she or he does love to do (mais j'adore nager). The same thing can be done with I hate . . .; I want to . . . on subsequent rounds.

B. Reading/ Answering and interpreting polls/ Communicating about topics of interest

A poll that utilizes infinitives for many of the answer choices is pulled from a foreign language magazine. Students respond to the poll. Their answers can be tallied and compared with the original results. Cultural similarities and differences can be discussed.

C. Reading/ Following instructions/ Communication about topics of interest

Students select a recipe that appeals to them from a foreign language magazine. They underline the action instructions (which will be infinitives in most instan-

ces). They pantomime the preparation steps. (Or they may go on and list ingredients, utensils, measurements, etc., and actually prepare the recipe at home or in school; this is a good interdisciplinary project with the home economics department.)

D. Writing/ Giving instructions/ Communication with a guest

A native speaker requests a recipe for some typically American dish (hamburgers, fried chicken, corn on the cob, punch) and students write it out using infinitives to give the instructions. There may be varieties for the same dish, and the native speaker can choose the "best" at a later date.

Grammar point: Demonstrative adjectives

Meanings: Identification, differentiation, and location

Skills/ Functions/ Activities:

A. Listening/ Learning to bargain/ Communication about topics of interest

Students listen to a conversation between a vendor and a buyer in a market; the vendor extols the virtues of this, that, these, and those products, while the buyer also discusses the relative merits of the merchandise. Students decide who made the better deal on each transaction.

B. Listening/ Guessing the identity of people and things from descriptions given/ Game

Students listen to a series of statements about people and things and try to identify them. The team with the most correct identifications wins (e.g., this man is a popular singer; these vegetables are round and orange).

C. Speaking/ Showing slides or pictures/ Communication about students' lives or topics of interest

Each student shows several slides or pictures to the class or a small group, identifying what is in the picture. (This monument is the Eiffel Tower; these men are gauchos.)

D. Speaking/ Browsing through a catalogue/ Role playing

As pages of a sales catalogue are shown on the opaque projector by "Santa Claus," the "little kids" indicate which items they want. Each item goes to that student who says, "I want this/that/these/those (shoes)." Students may be given a maximum amount of money or number of items. The statement must be grammatically correct for the student to receive the gift.

E. Reading/ Reporting accomplishments/ Communication about students' lives

Students write down something they have done this week, this month, this year, this decade. Each then reads the lists of all classmates in the group to see how many have written the same things. The exercise can be expanded by asking the students to add what they are going to do this week, year, etc. This activity can be turned into a "matching game," with awards for the team with the most matches.

F. Reading/ Evaluating information/ Role playing

Students pretend to be consumer advocates. They are given pages of products and advertising from foreign language magazines. They rate the ads on their truthfulness. (Teachers would select ads representative of demonstrative adjectives in the copy: This car is the most economical. Men love this perfume best. This medicine will cure everything.) Variations: Assign a certain category of products to small groups--cars, cosmetics, appliances, etc.

G. Writing/ Buying and selling/Appealing to tastes/ Translocation

Students pretend that they have been hired to write advertising copy for several products. They choose items from magazines (American products to sell in the target culture or target language products with new copy). They cut out the pictures, write the copy, and reassemble the ads (e.g., This movie is the most exciting of the year. This soap cleans better than those.)

H. Writing/ Criticizing movies, radio, and TV programs/ Communication on topics of interest

Students cut out the radio, TV, and movie sections of newspapers and mark programs they have heard or seen. Beside each one they write a statement of evaluation. (This movie is not good. This program has good music.)

They may discuss whether or not they think native speakers of various ages would agree.

Grammar point: Imperative

Meaning: Commanding, ordering

Skills/ Functions/ Activities:

A. Listening/ Following instructions/ Classroom exchanges

By the time students study the imperative, they should already have had some practical classroom exposure to it. The teacher can provide intensive practice now, sending students scurrying about the room as they obey his or her (or each other's) commands. Students might be encouraged to practice familiar forms with one another. When a student does not follow a command, he or she can be given a "punishment" (e.g., stand in the corner). Students can compete to see who lasts longest without error. They may discuss situations in which imperative forms might be used in the target culture.

B. Listening/Speaking/ Giving and receiving instructions/ Communication about topics of interest

In small groups, students decide upon something they want to teach others to make or do. Together they draw up instructions; when ready, they instruct another group (or the class) and provide necessary materials, without revealing the finished product. They judge their success at communicating by the result.

C. Listening/ Many functions/ Many activities

Just a reminder that most of the "total physical response" (Asher et al. 1974) lessons can fall into this category, for they are based on following instructions to practice language meanings.

D. Reading/ Buying, selling, and advertising/ Communication about topics of interest

Students select a series of five advertisements that use the imperative form from a foreign language magazine. They analyze each command to decide whether it tells you to (1) do something with the product, (2) feel something because of the product, or (3) become someone or something because of the product. They can then rate the ads in terms of appeal on a scale of 1 to 5, and share the best and the worst with the class.

E. Reading/ Comprehending descriptions of lifestyle/ Translocation

Students read a short article that describes table manners and eating habits in a target culture. The description is written in the imperative. (Place both hands on the table; eat with the fork in your left hand.) They then follow the description as though they were exchange students in the country. They may demonstrate comprehension in the cafeteria, in class with some food (e.g., a piece of fruit), or by pantomime with props.

F. Writing/ Announcing events/ Role playing

Students choose an imaginary occupation that attracts public participation and is based in a target language country. Examples include director of the Paris Ballet, manager of a Puerto Vallarta hotel, publicity agent for the Berlin Opera. They are to design a poster, write an announcement for radio, or an advertisement for the newspaper. They should appeal to the public by requesting their attendance, by telling how great the event is, by suggesting how they will react, or with any other slogan built upon the command form.

Grammar point: Comparative constructions

Meanings: Equality, inequality in size, shape, color, age, etc.

Skills/ Functions/ Activities:

A. Listening/ Identifying objects and persons/ Game

Students listen to comparisons of one item or person with others and try to identify the item or person as soon as possible. The teacher continues to give clues until someone guesses. (It's bigger than the desk but smaller than a car. It's as red as an apple; etc.) This could be played as a bingo-type game, so that the student who correctly identified the most items/people would be the winner.

B. Speaking/ Bragging/ Communication about students' lives/ Make-believe

Students in a circle take turns enlarging upon an initial statement. They should tell the truth until they need to invent to go one better. (For example: My fish was bigger than a cat. My fish was bigger than the

desk. My fish was bigger than the blackboard. My fish was bigger than an elephant!)

C. Reading/ Debating ideas/ Communication about topics of interest

Students read a series of statements expressing equality or inequality (e.g., Girls are smarter than boys. French cuisine is more delicious than Italian cooking. Reagan is more conservative than Carter. This class is more difficult than my others. The language teacher is more beautiful/handsome than the history teacher). They decide whether they agree or disagree; in the latter case, they amend the statement for truth. In a group, they share opinions and give their reasons, debating those where differences exist.

D. Writing/ Complaining/ Make-believe

Students write lists of complaints to an imaginary Universal Dictator about the inequalities in the world. One person is chosen as the Universal Dictator and responds to the complaints. (Black people have less power than whites. Poor people have less to eat. The wealthy pay less in taxes.)

E. Listening/Reading/ Comparing and contrasting/ Communication on topics of interest

Students either listen to advertisements on the radio (if available) or look in magazines. Each pair of students is given a product to research, e.g., soap, detergents, perfume, dishwashers, cars. They take notes and then choose the best product and provide an oral or written rationale for their decision. (I choose a Citroën because it is larger than a Renault, less expensive than a Mercedes-Benz, more economical than a Ford, etc.)

Grammar point: Simple past (passé composé, preterit) versus imperfect

Meaning: Past action or event initiated or completed versus past continuous or habitual action or event

Skills/ Functions/ Activities:

A. Listening/Speaking/ Evaluating the truthfulness of accounts/ Role playing

Students pretend to be a jury hearing a criminal case. The situation is explained to them, and they listen to the testimony of several witnesses. At the end of the "trial," they try to come to an agreement about the guilt or innocence of the suspect.

B. Speaking/Reading/ Telling jokes/ Translocation

Students pretend to be at a party where the guests are competing to see who can tell the funniest joke. Each one tells a brief story in the past, with a punch line. (Watch out for puns that do not translate!) At the end, they vote on the funniest jokes. Variation: These may be drawn from a foreign language version of the Reader's Digest.

C. Reading/ Locating facts about topics/ Communication about topics of interest

Students are given an actual newspaper article, an adapted one, or a teacher-designed one. They are asked to list in one column all the key events that happened. In the second column, they are to list any surrounding circumstances or descriptions. (The first column will be primarily simple past, the second imperfect.)

D. Writing/ Writing a story/ Out-of-class assignment with a native speaker

In small groups, students decide upon a story that is typically American in content (George Washington and the cherry tree, Ben Franklin and his kite, the buzzards return to Hinkley, Ohio) that they might share with a native speaker. They then list the key events, which will be simple past. They decide what circumstances surround each event. They build their paragraphs around this beginning. Finished stories are forwarded to the native speaker, who responds if he or she needs clarification.

Grammar point: Contrary-to-fact constructions (Si-clauses)

Meaning: Supposition about illusory conditions

Skills/ Functions/ Activities:

A. Listening/ Interpreting warnings/ Communication about topics of interest

Students pretend to receive a list of warnings, which

they must translate into direct commands or an explanation of the meaning to show they have comprehended. (Examples: If I were you, I would be very careful about cheating. If you were smart, you would do the assignment on time.)

B. Speaking/ Empathizing/ Role playing

Students pretend to be a series of other people, and each states a wish that those people might have made. (For example, Jack Penny: If I were young, I would study the violin better. Your mother: If I were single, I would take a long vacation.)

C. Reading/ Contemplating world events/Making generalizations/ Communication about topics of interest

Students read a paragraph entitled "What if . . .?" Suppositions are made in it such as "If the British had colonized South America, and the Spanish had come to New England . . .," "If Detroit had produced a good small car in 1975. . .," "If France had not aided the American Colonies during the Revolution. . . ." A true/false comprehension exercise follows with suggested results. (Examples for above: We would speak Spanish. The Japanese would have produced a cheaper one. We would belong to England today.)

D. Writing/ Making polite suggestions/ Classroom/school exchanges

Students write notes for the suggestion box to school authorities. (Examples: To the teacher: If you spoke in a louder voice, we could hear you better. To the principal: If you let us have a recreation room, we would not get into trouble during free time. To the cafeteria staff: If you prepared what we like, less food would be wasted.)

Grammar point: Present subjunctive with expressions of influence and doubt

Meaning: Varies according to expression used

Skills/ Functions/ Activities:

A. Listening/ Gathering suggestions/ Communication with native speakers

Native speakers are invited to the class. Students pre-

tend to be taking a trip to their country/countries. The guests have been asked in advance to prepare a list of recommendations for traveling. (I recommend that you take only one suitcase. I suggest that you take warm clothes. It is best that you carry travelers' cheques.) Students take notes and then make up a list of what they will be taking.

B. Speaking/ Getting others to do things/ Game

Students make a written list of things to ask a classmate to do. Each then gives his or her orders but attributes them to someone else. (The teacher wants you to clean the blackboards. Chuck, Judy wants you to throw the eraser at Carl.) The designated student must respond by refusing or doing as she or he is told.

C. Reading/ Getting advice/ Translocation

Students read a series of statements giving advice in certain situations. (Examples: You have a toothache. Parent: I want you to go to the dentist. Friend: I hope it won't hurt. Druggist: I want you to take this pill. Another friend: I want you to try acupuncture.) Students rank the advice in their order of preference.

D. Writing/ Evaluating information/ Communication about topics of interest

As a homework assignment, each student is to make a list of ten statements that include some truths and some lies or improbabilities. The next day lists are exchanged, and the other person reacts by stating in writing: "I doubt that . . . . I don't believe that . . . . I believe that . . . . It's impossible that . . ." and adds a statement to support this opinion or belief. Upon completion of the written portion, the two participants discuss conflicts or disagreements.

Grammar point: Ser vs. estar in Spanish

Meaning: Normal qualities versus changed qualities

Skills/ Functions/ Activities:

A. Listening/ Understanding descriptions of people/ Role playing

The class, pretending to work for the police, listen to descriptions of "thieves" and identify their pictures from the "wanted" files (provided by the teacher).

B. Listening/ Agreeing or disagreeing with statements/ Communication about the classroom and students' lives outside it

As the class listens to a series of statements, they write SI or NO according to whether or not they agree. (This is a good school. The teacher is fat. Mary is pretty.) They will need to listen carefully to tell whether characteristics are temporary or permanent.

C. Speaking/ Describing people/ Communication about students' lives

Each student describes someone who has made a great impression on him or her by giving three or four items of information about the person.

D. Reading/ Locating lost items/ Translocation

Students pretend to work for the police department. They read descriptions of lost items and locate them in composite pictures. (Popi is a small dog. He is black and white. He is very thin because he has nothing to eat.) They identify the location of the item. (Popi is in the street.)

E. Writing/ Describing settings for stories/ Make-believe

Students make up a story (based on magazine pictures, if necessary) and write only the beginning, in which they describe a scene and/or some characters. They exchange papers and read one another's descriptions.

Grammar point: Partitive article in French

Meaning: Mass rather than count for nouns

Skills/ Functions/ Activities:

A. Listening/ Offering and accepting food, drink/ Translocation

Sets of pictures represent mass and count food and drink items (a loaf of bread/slices in a basket, a stick/portion of butter). Students sit around a table with the pictures in the center. The teacher requests items quickly from the students sharing the dinner. (Passez-moi un fromage. Passez-moi du fromage.) If students are not correct, clarification is given. This can also be done as a team game with points for correct responses.

B. Speaking/ Requesting food/ Role playing

Students are given a French menu with items listed without determiners. One student plays the waiter for each table of two to four diners who order their dinner from the menu. The waiter brings pictures of what they request from the kitchen. (If they say de la carotte, a portion of a carrot is served!)

C. Reading/ Following instructions on how to make something/ Communication on topics of interest

Students are given a recipe from a French magazine. They underline articles accompanying nouns. Then they pull the noun phrases and demonstrate by picture or realia what quantities would be needed (one skillet, some onions or one onion, or the onions that have been chopped).

D. Writing/ Describing places/ Communication about students' lives

Each student writes a description of the Thanksgiving table and the objects that are there. (They may need some help with vocabulary. This can be done in a vocabulary session where a reference list is developed.) They are encouraged to pay attention to their use of articles. They might share the paragraph with a native speaker or classmate who tries to draw the table as described.

Conclusion

The possibilities for combining functional practice with the grammar lessons in a textbook are vast. Some teachers, however, might want to develop purposeful language exercises around the vocabulary units, or, on a more global scale, as culminating activities for a unit. The process outlined in this paper is applicable as well to such semantically organized sections of the text.

For example, suppose that the vocabulary presentation in a chapter includes "the rooms in a house." The teacher can select from the list of purposes one that might be related to this vocabulary. The procedure used with grammar points would be amended so that the activity might look like this:

Content/theme	Skill	Purpose	Activity
Rooms of the house	Reading	Buying, selling, advertising	Translocation

Students are given a section of the classified ads dealing with rental apartments in a given FL/city. They pretend that their new jobs (which they select) are taking them to that city. They decide upon the maximum they can pay for rent. They are to select the best five possibilities for apartments and list them in rank order. Next to each, they list the pertinent information, and in another column, they list questions they want to ask about those accommodations. Note: Students will almost be playing a word game as they try to match abbreviations used in ads with vocabulary items. Functional practice can be done with other skills, purposes, and activity formats adapted to any text component.

A final concern that must be addressed when implementing functional practice is the issue of evaluation/grading. It should be noted that the activities described in this booklet are conceived primarily as practice opportunities; consequently, evaluation in terms of student success and achievement of purpose supersedes grading considerations.

The role of error should be considered carefully; errors that impede communication are more serious than those that are indicative of the non-native but intelligible. Teachers may wish to be more critical of errors within the range of the item that is being focused upon than those that are only peripheral. Scales that describe the degree of success may be especially suitable for these activities; many of these are found in the literature (see especially Jorstad 1980). These activities are suitable for redoing by those students who are not satisfactorily communicating in a given session. Individual performances can be rated and subsequent suggestions for improvement can be made at a level accurate for that learner.

If the teacher feels that some grading should be involved, it can be done on a point basis or credit given for participation. Since the activity encourages students to use coping and creative abilities along with linguistic ones, a measure of accuracy that was too stringent or punitive would be unfair and inhibiting to the learner--a condition that would discourage functional practice and eventual communication in the target language.

The goal of having built functional language practice into the course is that the gap between classroom activity and real world activity will have been appreciably reduced, and when the learner steps out of the classroom into the foreign language world, the reality of purposeful listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills will allow him or her to function effectively in the second language.

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